

# Urban Academy Times

THE YEAR OF INNOVATION



## Head of School News

### Welcome to the New School Year!

I hope everyone enjoyed the summer break. I would like to welcome back returning families and extend a warm welcome to families that are new to Urban Academy.

Our theme this year is *The Year of Innovation*. This year we will explore what leads to innovation, what historical figures demonstrated innovative abilities, what factors set the stage for increased innovation, as well as ethical questions relating to innovation. We invite you to explore with your children any innovations that were developed in the past by your ancestors, your own interest in innovations, and questions you have about innovators from history. We also encourage you to do something innovative as a family.

Many of you have contributed ideas to the Urban Academy Strategic Plan. The implementation of your ideas will help us to inspire students to learn in innovative ways. Many organizations have challenges harnessing the potential of all their human resources. The UA Strategic Plan will help to guide us to work collaboratively so that together we can realize the potential of our community. I appreciate all the parents who took time to contribute to our current strategic plan. Parents who would like to learn more

about our strategic plan can contact Barbara, our school administrator at the end of the first week of classes.

The Urban Academy staff met for several days before school started to ensure a smooth start to the school year. Several of the staff new to UA this year have already been involved in collaborative planning with our returning staff. As a whole, the UA staff continues to be a synergistic group of people that inspire excellence in teaching.

Areas of focus for the upcoming year are:

- continued academic excellence and high academic standard with a focus on developing more authentic assessment opportunities for students.
- further the effectiveness of our communication with parents.
- continued focus on teacher and student self-assessment using the BC Performance Standards in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Social Responsibility.
- further development of our arts-infused programs.
- formalization of a public speak program-spanning all grade levels.
- formalization of our social-emotional learning -spanning all grade levels.
- increased afterschool programs.
- increase programs where our students give back to their communities.

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### Upcoming Events for September

- ◆ Sept.3 - Back to School Barbeque
- ◆ Sept. 8 - First day of classes
- ◆ Sept. 8 - Parent Orientation Sessions
- ◆ Sept. 22 - Pro D Day
- ◆ Sept. 25 - Terry Fox Run
- ◆ Sept. 29 & 30 - High School Focus Group Meetings
- ◆ Sept. 30 - School Pictures

## URBAN ACADEMY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

I enjoyed seeing you at the Back-to-School Barbeque.

Yours in Service

Michael Bouchard,  
Head of School

P.S. Here is a quote that relates to innovation (thank goodness the Wright Brothers never listened to Lord Kelvin):

*Heavier than air flying machines are impossible.*  
– Lord Kelvin, President, Royal Society, 1895

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### Message from the Board Chair

Dear Parents, Students and Staff,

On behalf of the Board, I wish to welcome all of you to the start of a wonderful new school year. This summer for me and I hope for all of you, was a time of relaxation and joy, mixed with accomplishments and of course some work too.

It was also a time of reflection, preparation, and inspiration. This Year's theme of "Innovation" brings to the forefront the new and creative and encourages following ideas and inspirations where they may lead us.

One of the things that has inspired me recently, is this song that I heard for the first time. It encapsulates how I feel about what makes Urban Academy such a wonderful place and motivates me to continue to look at ways in which we can grow and be even better.

#### Walls Mark Our Boundaries

Walls mark our bound'ries and keep us apart  
Walls keep the world from our eyes and our heart  
Tables are round, making room for one more,  
Welcoming friends we had not know before.

#### Refrain

So build us a table and tear down the wall  
Love is our host. There is room for us all

## URBAN ACADEMY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Walls make us sure who is in who is out  
Walls keep us safe from all question and doubt,  
But at a table in open exchange  
New ties are formed as our lives rearrange

Once we were strangers, divided, alone  
Hate and distrust built a wall stone by stone  
Now at a table the bread that we share  
Joins us together in a circle of care.

Text: Ruth C. duck. © 1996, The Pilgrim Press, Music: Jim Strathdee

Sometimes, between the finances, Strategic plans, policies, scheduling etc., running a school can seem very complicated and busy.  
But in truth, the Education of our children, inclusion of the parents, support of the whole family, motivation and support for our staff and the growth of our school, all come back to something very simple: caring for people.

I believe that at its heart, this is what makes Urban Academy strong and will support it into the future.

I am so proud to work along side so many individuals who embody that caring. Of course, there are no perfect people or perfect schools, but if we as a community continue to care for those around us and to look for the good, to share our talents and skills with each other, to stretch out to others wherever we can, the foundation of this place will be unshakable.

So come to the table! This is your place. Whether you are a student, a parent, a teacher, a volunteer or whether you are a new family and this is your first year, have been here since the beginning or somewhere in between, you have a place here and we welcome you.

Laura Drummond  
Chair

## September Birthdays



September 7<sup>th</sup> - Kebira  
September 8<sup>th</sup> - Axel and Emma Uphill  
September 9<sup>th</sup> - Jennah  
September 14<sup>th</sup> - Serena  
September 16<sup>th</sup> - Marcus  
September 20<sup>th</sup> - Erin  
September 25<sup>th</sup> - Aleena  
September 26<sup>th</sup> - Nicholas

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### High School Focus Group Meeting Schedule

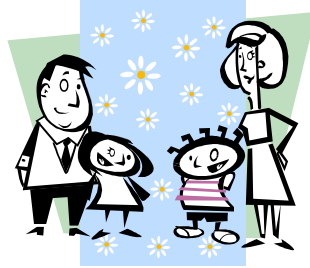
Tuesday, September 29th	Wednesday, September 30th
	9:30 am – 11:30 am
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
3:30 pm – 5:30 pm	3:30 pm – 5:30 pm
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

**Please note that we are offering multiple sessions per day in an effort to find the times that are most convenient for the most parents. The sessions that have minimal registration will be cancelled. Our hope is to end up with three sessions per day. Parents will be notified if sessions are cancelled.**

## Ms. Nadia's Class News

Welcome to all New and Old Junior Kindergarten students. I look forward to meeting all of you.

During the month of September, we will be focusing on "Me and my Family". I would like all students to bring a picture of them and their family.



Our goal throughout the month of September will be focusing on routines and familiarizing ourselves with the school facility and staff. The children will be introduced to our school staff, where the washrooms are, and basically getting to know our classroom daily routines.

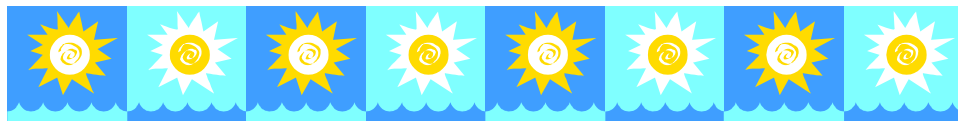
On the first day of school, September 8 from 9 to 11.45 all children and their family are welcome to observe and play in the JK class room. At this time parent -teacher's conferences will be held in the same room. You will find a sign up sheet posted in the JK room. We will not have time for all the families but we will continue our meetings on the Parent orientation night.

### Reminders:

- Please make sure your child's uniform is labeled.
- Please send your child with appropriate clothing .We will be going outside rain or shine.
- Change of clothing. Send your child with an extra change of clothing just in case of an accident.(Label them)
- Please send two snacks, lunch and a drink (water is the best). Extra snacks are great.

Please do not hesitate to inquire about the program or your child's day. I look forward to working together.

Ms. Nadia



## URBAN ACADEMY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

### Ms. Wright, Mr. Bouchard, Ms. Penner and Ms. Celis Class News

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to our students and parents of the K-1 classes in the 2009-2010 Urban Academy's Year of Innovation.

For the first time in the history of the school, we will have three classes from the same grade level, the ideal situation to work in tight collaboration.

We are a dynamic and committed team of teachers. We believe that by working together and sharing our ideas we will develop and deliver a consistent program that meets the needs of each individual child. In the spirit of our theme, innovation, we will lead our groups through a successful year by:

- devoting a weekly collaborative planning time,
- developing cross curricular and thematic units,
- implementing "circles of interest," addressing small group levels of performance,
- fostering a sense of community and friendship amongst the three classrooms.

### September 2009

Theme: "We Are All in This Together"

Overall goals: To develop a classroom and school culture by understanding and following basic procedures and routines.

To understand that our school community is a safe place where we are able to take risks in our own learning.

#### L.A. and Social Studies:

Who am I?

Who supports me in my community?

How do I become a part of my community?

How do I respond by being a member of my community?

#### Health and Career:

How do I express my feelings and emotions in a healthy and effective way?



## URBAN ACADEMY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Ms. Wright, Mr. Bouchard, Ms. Penner and Ms. Celis Class News

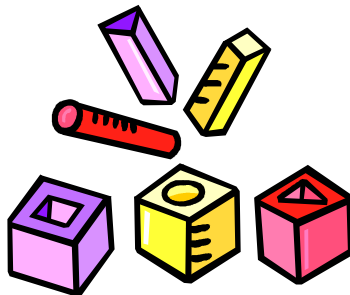
### Science:

How do I explore my community? (Five Senses)

### Math:

What shapes do I discover around me? (Shapes)

Where do I find patterns in the word around me? (Patterns)



### P.E.:

Safety in the gym and routines of the class.

Cooperative games

Spatial Awareness

### French:

*Salutations*

*Mon Corps (My Body)*

*"Simon dit"*

How do you support our work from home?

- Establish some routines at home that will assist your child to understand that there are also patterns in our activities: eating, relaxing, playing, sleeping, reading, etc.
- Make sure that your child has a good night sleep.
- Provide your child with healthy choices in the lunch box: fruits, vegetables, healthy non-sugary cereals and juices.
- An easy-to handle water bottle with fresh water every day.

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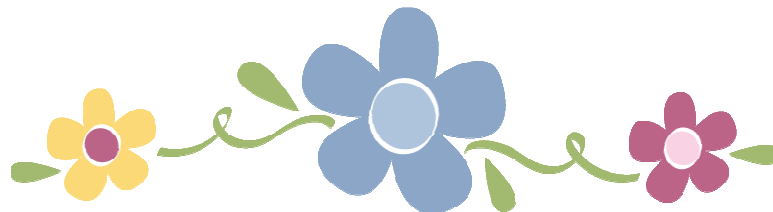
If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to come and talk to us or contact us through the office. We hope both teachers and parents can work as a team to develop and support all our students.

We are all looking forward to an exciting year with both you and your child. Welcome back!

Ms. Wright, Mr. Bouchard, Ms. Penner and Ms. Celis

The chart below indicates which teachers, beside your child's homeroom teacher, will be working with your child:

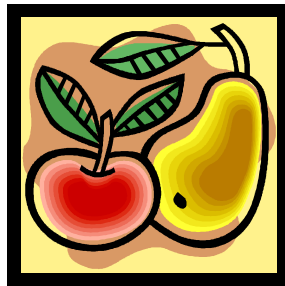
	Social Studies	Health and Career	Physical Education
Ms. Celis' class		Ms. Virani	Mr. Bouchard
Ms. Penner's class	Miss MacDonald	Miss MacDonald	Mr. Armstrong
Ms. Wright's class	Mr. Bouchard		Mr. Bouchard



## Miss MacDonald's Class News

I hope everyone had a very refreshing summer! I have the pleasure of teaching the Grade Two and Three students this year. This month, we will focus mainly on our routines, organization and make our first steps towards creating a positive community of learners in our classroom. We will work together to establish rules and expectations for everyone. By working as a team we will set the stage for a community that will be inviting and comfortable for everyone.

We begin with a themed unit on Apples. This unit will connect with topics in all areas of the curriculum, and will be practically based on a strand from the social studies curriculum on agriculture and harvesting.



**In PE**, we will be preparing for the Terry Fox run by working on our endurance, refining our stretching skills and playing cooperative games.

**In Science** we will connect to our Apple theme as we begin a very exciting unit on plant growth and changes. We will explore various plant life cycles and focus on the importance of plants and trees in our environment.

The students will be taking home their agendas daily to be reviewed and signed. It is my hope that this will be a great way for us to communicate on a daily basis. Please ensure that the agenda is read and signed and that any questions or concerns you might have are listed. I look forward to talking with you to share information and to become better acquainted with you and your child.

I am very excited to be learning with the Grade Two and Three students this year, as well as cooperating together with you to ensure the most positive and welcoming atmosphere in the classroom.

## Mr. Armstrong's Class News

Welcome to an exciting school year at the Urban Academy! I feel privileged to work with everyone involved with the Urban Academy and am committed to the success of every child. We have a great group of students with whom your child can learn and make friends with and during September, we are going to focus mainly on the routines and procedures required for academic success. Your child's time here will be well spent and I will make every moment count. I will do my best to include you in activities and events that take place throughout the year, and will make myself available to discuss the success of your child.

In September, the fourth graders will have the exciting opportunity to author their in-class rules. This will be achieved through codifying the topics covered during classroom discussions about acceptable behaviours and completion of assignments and projects. Through structuring classroom rules in this manner, students will be involved in the process of creating a highly functional learning environment.

### **Language Arts:**

I am well aware that the students in my class have just experienced an exciting and worthwhile summer and I am looking forward to reading about the exciting things they did. To this end, students will be responsible for producing a writing assignment documenting the highlights of their summer. Class time will be allotted towards completing this assignment and the presentation portion of this project will allow students to share their work with their peers. In addition, Andrew Clements' acclaimed chapter book *Frindle* will be the focus of our first novel study. Towards fostering a lifelong love for reading, students will be responsible for 20 minutes of reading a night.



## Mr. Armstrong's Class News

### Math:

September will begin with a review of multiplication/division/addition/subtraction questions covered in third grade, working towards creating a strong familiarity with numerical concepts. Our first unit in fourth grade will be Addition and Subtraction, and we will be using the Math Makes Sense 4 textbook, complemented by approved manipulative materials in order to reach the various learning styles of the fourth grade classroom. I hope to achieve a fun and safe learning environment during Math classes, where students are encouraged to take risks and learn from each other.

### Science:

Tornadoes in Ontario! Fires in the Okanogan! The hottest day in the history of Vancouver! A hurricane hits Halifax! What was the deal with our weather this summer!? The fourth grade students will endeavour to find out. Using the Nelson Science Probe 4, newspaper articles and weather observation charts, students will develop a better understanding of what weather is and how various forces in our world influence storms and like phenomena.



### Social Studies:

Students will review the provinces and territories that constitute Canada as well as the national, provincial and territorial capital cities. To achieve this, students will produce a clearly labeled map of Canada exhibiting their understanding. From this academic foundation, we will begin to learn the stories about explorers who came upon our land and established settlements that would prove to be the framework for a tri-coastal, multi-cultural nation.

### Physical Education:

With the Olympics coming to town in early 2010 and world-records being shattered by Usain Bolt, sports were undoubtedly on our minds this summer. To tap into this enthusiasm a strong physical education program will be established from the outset. Games of Low Organization will allow students to learn how to function as a team and to practice problem-solving skills. Furthermore, a daily regimen of fifteen minutes of exercise will allow students the opportunity to explore their love of fitness.

Thank you kindly for reading. I am looking forward to a fantastic year working with you and your child.

## Ms. Alexandra's Class News

Dear students and families,

Welcome back from what I hope was a refreshing and restful summer balanced with a healthy amount of adventure and excitement. Although I am new to Urban Academy I am familiar and very supportive of Mr. Bouchard's initiatives that include Kieran Egan's *Imaginative Education*; problem solving as discussed in the book *Positive Discipline* by Jane Nelson, Lynn Lott, and H. Stephen Glenn; and Susan Close's *Smart Reading Program*. If you have any questions in regards to these teaching philosophies, please feel free to contact myself or borrow from my resources so that you can support these initiatives in your home.

My own teaching philosophy involves a genuine concern for understanding both my students' individual skills and what motivates my students to learn. Class meetings as a means to develop social skills like problem solving, as explained in the book *Positive Discipline in the Classroom*, will be held from three times a week or more during home room and **Health and Career** blocks. The "courage, confidence, and life skills" (xiii) learned through these meetings are imperative in forming a solid foundation from which students will build their academics upon. **Health and Career** will also include other topics as outlined in the curriculum including *Bullying*, *Drug Use*, and *Nutrition*. I am open to including topics that you see as valuable for this age group.

Provided is a brief overview of the month of September. In table format is an even briefer overview of the year. I was delighted to discover that once I rearranged the chronology of the chapters in the books, that the subjects for the most part complement each other.

Thus, we begin in **Language Arts** by studying creation stories in order to compliment our studies in **Geography/Social Studies** on the creation of the earth; primarily plate tectonics, volcanoes, and earthquakes. In **Science** we will learn the art of scientific questioning followed by plant and animal cells. In **Math** we begin with the perimeter of shapes and the measurement of angles in preparation for a unit in Geography that involves calculating the latitude of the earth. **Language Arts** will also involve spelling, and grammar particularly in punctuation (the correct use of the comma) and adjectives. We will also begin our first novel study: *Macbeth*. Although teaching Shakespeare at such a young age might seem a daunting task, the theme of tragedy, death, witches and ghosts are fascinating to this age group! We hope to have the production set for Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup> yes Halloween! In all subject areas, students will learn to work independently, as well as in groups.

## Ms. Alexandra's Class News

In PE students will begin by implementing strong team building skills through soft skill initiative games like trust games, leadership opportunities, and touch football. As well, with the upcoming Terry Fox Run, we will be working on endurance training.



Being that this is ***THE YEAR OF INNOVATION*** we will regularly study innovators within our subject areas. This approach brings an aspect of humanness to some subjects that are traditionally lacking in that area. My hope is that through studying innovators of our past and present, that our students will see themselves as potential innovators of the present and the future. I look forward to maintaining an open and welcoming relationship with you throughout the year!



### Art

Ms. Spencer is looking forward to a new year with Urban Academy Students, Parents and Staff!

In art, the students will be orientating themselves the first few weeks with the art room, classroom routines and expectations, as well as, starting a few small projects working with the elements and principles of design to get them started. The students will have an opportunity to discuss in their groups what their interests are in art and mediums they might like to work with throughout the year. One of our focuses in art this year will be about making connections to the world around us and enriching the learning taking place in the core classes by expanding those ideas into the world of art.



In French class with Ms Spencer, the students will be picking up where they left of in their textbooks with Mme. Celis. The intermediate and seniors groups will begin with a unit based on developing their conversation skills by learning to pose and answer a variety of questions. This will be an excellent time for them to review what they learned last year and keep it fresh in their minds. One of our main goals this year will be creating dialogue and speaking French in the classroom. The Primary students will also be doing some review of questions commonly used in the classroom. Once the students are feeling settled we will begin learning some new vocabulary and songs.

See you all soon! Hope you all had a wonderful summer!  
Ms. Spencer

# September 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 <b>Back to School Barbeque</b>	3	4	5
6	7 <b>Happy Birthday Kebira</b>	8 <b>School Opens Orientation</b> 9:00am & 7:00pm  <b>Happy Birthday Axel &amp; Emma U.</b>	9 <b>Happy Birthday Jennah</b>	10	11	12
13	14 <b>Happy Birthday Serena</b>	15	16 <b>Happy Birthday Marcus</b>	17	18	19
20 <b>Happy Birthday Erin</b>	21	22 <b>Pro D Day - No School</b>	23	24	25 <b>Happy Birthday Aleena</b>  <b>Terry Fox Run</b>	26 <b>Happy Birthday Nicholas</b>
27	28	29 <b>High School Focus Group Meetings</b>	30 <b>School Pictures</b> <b>High School Focus Group Meetings</b>	 Urban Academy		